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2. Living Conditions and Discipline of Party Members

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1. A candidate for membership in the Chinese Communist Party must first obtain a position in the government service. Then he must work hard to attract the attention of the officer in charge of his department. He is usually subjected to severe tests of patience and loyalty. If he survives these, he is given political books to study and he must spend most of his free time at discussion meetings and political lectures.
2. The above process takes at least three months, but in nearly every case it is about two years before the candidate's name is submitted for membership. Two full party members must vouch for him and be responsible for his future good behavior. His name, background, particulars and confidential reports are then submitted to the highest party authorities in the area. From then on, he is regarded as a reserve or waiting member and is subject to surveillance for an indefinite period before becoming a full member. These conditions apply to people of middle age who have been connected with the party for some years.
3. Members of the armed forces at the front may become party members as a reward for meritorious service, and skilled workers and professional men who have distinguished themselves in some way are sometimes invited to full membership. Excepting the young, those who have not distinguished themselves in any way rarely become party members.
4. The first step toward membership for a young person leaving school is to join the New Democratic Youth Corps. This is difficult and not all those who are admitted obtain party membership. This method of entry into the party has been rigidly applied since 1950.
5. On admission, the party member is issued a membership book which bears his photograph. His personal file is held by his employers, who enter a routine confidential report every three months, or more frequently if required.

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6. There are three grades of subsistence and living conditions for party members known as the "small kitchen", "middle kitchen" and "big kitchen". New members and low-ranking officials receive big kitchen rations, members of several years standing, such as medium-ranking officials, the middle kitchen, and the small kitchen is reserved for the most favored. Medium-ranking officials would be required to complete a course successfully at the University in Peiping and, if young enough, to perform military service before they could qualify for posts which would entitle them to small kitchen rations.
7. Almost all party officials who hold important positions have been party members for about twenty years. Officials of middle rank with access to classified documents must be party members of several years' standing and, for security reasons, they are seldom employed in their native cities.
8. The lives of medium and low-ranking officials are subject to regimentation and strict party discipline. Their off duty hours are usually filled by organized political activities and so-called voluntary work for the cause. In Canton, government employees are allowed one free evening each week when they can visit friends individually. This is known as "free movement." In addition to this they may take part in sports and visit cinemas in properly organized groups.

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